

VZCZCXRO9094
OO RUEHROV
DE RUEHJM #0121 0231503
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 231503Z JAN 08
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0323
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC PRIORITY

UNCLAS JERUSALEM 000121

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

NEA FOR FRONT OFFICE, NSC FOR ABRAMS/SINGH/PASCUAL

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [KWBG](#) [PINS](#) [IS](#) [PTER](#) [PGOV](#)

SUBJECT: PA CONVICTS TWO FOR MURDER OF OFF-DUTY IDF
SOLDIERS, HANDS DOWN 15-YEAR SENTENCES

REF: 07 JERUSALEM 2628

11. (SBU) National Security Forces (NSF) contacts confirmed press reports that on January 22 a PA military court in Hebron convicted Ali Abd al-Hamid Dandis and Amar Badr Halim Taha of "intentional killing" (a charge similar to voluntary manslaughter and not as serious as premeditated murder) in the December 28 shooting deaths of two off-duty IDF soldiers, and sentenced both to 15 years imprisonment (the maximum for the charge under the PA's penal code). The court rejected court-appointed defense attorney Subhi Ja'bari's contention that the defendants had been threatened by the armed Israelis and acted in self-defense. However, the court found insufficient evidence of premeditation to convict the two of murder. The court dropped a lesser charge, "harming Palestinian public interests."

12. (SBU) NSF contacts say they are coordinating with the IDF to move the convicts to Jericho prison to serve their sentences there. They say the two will be treated as serious criminals.

WALLES